



Issue: 85

The GRANGE

SEPTEMBER 2001

CHAIR'S REPORT

HI! I hope you all had a good summer. And managed a holiday. Georgette, Jenny and I have been pretty busy lately gearing up for the *House Guest* exhibition which opens with the party in Grange Park, Sept 15.

Nevertheless, I had, with a friend, a pleasant two weeks in the Maritimes. We spent time in Halifax, took a bus tour around Cape Breton and went to Digby and Weymouth in the Annapolis Valley for a day to visit a friend. It was extremely interesting to compare the two areas. They are completely different. Each has spectacular scenery, of course, and each has a French or Acadian background, but the Bay of Fundy area seems more prosperous and the towns and villages more established. That may not be so, but that was my impression. Both areas have former French forts; Cape Breton has the very extensive fort and village of Louisburg (pronounced Lewisburg by the locals); and, Annapolis Royal has Fort Anne, not large but interesting. One thing our friend particularly wanted us to see was a tapestry – four large needlepoint panels depicting the four centuries of Acadian history in the area – they are magnificent.

There are confusing aspects of Nova Scotia though, the Great Blue Heron seemed to me to be more brown than blue and the White Spruce is green, I didn't see any Blue Jays but they would probably look pink! They have squirrels all over the place as we do, but in Nova Scotia they are brown and about half the size of Ontario squirrels. They are just as cute though!

On a more serious note and with reference to my greeting of "Hi" and our policy of never greeting visitors to The Grange that way, Jenny received an e-mail recently that dealt with the meaning of "hi" and its origins. According to the dictionary "hi" is equivalent to "hey" and dates from the 1400s. It was meant as an attention getter, not a greeting. Tom Kelleher of ALHFAM (Association of Living History, Farm and Agricultural Museums) writes, "So, in the 18th or 19th centuries you might call across the fields, "Hey Tom!" or "Hi Tom!" to get my attention,... but you would not greet me that way face to face."

I have a personal theory about "Hi" as it is used today. I think it originally was the greeting "How are you?" which became "Hiya" and eventually "Hi", all strictly twentieth century.

Mr Kelleher goes on to talk of "hello" which he says was merely a "shout to call attention or express surprise" until the advent of the telephone when it became the standard when picking up the instrument. Katrina Atkinson, a Thursday volunteer told me that her grandmother, when she was a girl, was forbidden to use the word "hello" because the word "Hell" was part of it!

As you all know, September 15th is the big day when *House Guests* will be opening with the "do" in Grange Park. I know you will welcome, as I do, all the new volunteers who will be helping us throughout the *House Guests* period. As Michelle mentions in her article there are 30+ new Grangers so it is impossible to mention them all by name but I sincerely hope they will be happy with us and come to love The Grange as much as we do.

- Avril Stringer, The Grange Chair

In This Issue

- A Bizarre Coincidence 2
- The Grange Volunteer Executive 2
- Installation of House Guests 2
- Description of the Artists of the House Guests Exhibit 3
- Training Sessions for the House Guest Exhibit 4
- Goldwin Smith - Still in the news 4

A Bizarre Coincidence

As a volunteer at The Grange I thought perhaps you would find this story of coincidence interesting.

I have been a volunteer at The Grange for over five years; just this spring another volunteer with the same name as mine joined The Grange.

My name is Diane Reid and the new volunteer is also Dianne Reid (with 2 n's). I was introduced to her at one of The Grange dinners. We both have brown hair, brown eyes and are approximately the same height. Although these similarities don't seem to be too earth shattering the following will make you wonder. While enjoying The Grange dinner on that particular night, the subject of what I do as a hobby was discussed. It turns out that she also did the same, which surprised me. I do Vintage Fashion shows and collect 20th century fashions, Dianne had a collection she no longer wanted and offered it to me - I was more than pleased to receive this collection. To thank her for the generous gift we went out to dinner. It was during this time that the coincidence became more than strange. We were talking about our backgrounds and found out that we went to the same high school, Dianne was one grade behind me. So I checked out my yearbook for 1962-63 and there was Dianne Reid. Then other similarities came forth. She took ballet, I took tap. Although her birthday is in September and mine is in October, Dianne should have been in October, but was premature and came one month too soon.

What makes the coincidence more bizarre is how we were named. The song "Diane" or "Dianne" comes from a movie, a very old movie from the 1930's. Nobody would know about this movie unless you were a movie-goer, obviously both mothers liked the song and named their daughters after it. This movie although made in the 1930's was seen in the 1940's around the time before and after the Second World War.

What are the chances of two people unknown to each other and meeting after almost 40 years, having similar interests and both volunteering at The Grange?

Thank you from Diane Reid (with one n), Sunday Volunteer

House Guests - Installation Update *Contemporary Artists in The Grange*

The works are being installed by the artists during the week of September the 4th and 10th. If you can, pop by, because it should be interesting to see the pieces installed and meet with the artists. *House Guests* opens to the public September 15th. The release date for the book is November 21st.

Sept 4-7th: Christy Thompson (pantry) will install her work.

Anteroom continues to be prepared.

Elizabeth LeMoine will visit during the week.

Robert Fones begins the anteroom installation.

Luise Jacob (music room) will install his work.

Sept 10-11th: Rebecca Belmore (best bedroom) installs her work.

Elaine Reichek (library) will re-arrange library furniture and install her work.

Volunteer training (see page 4)

Sept 12th: Press Review

Josiah McElheny will install his work in the front hall.

Volunteer training (see page 4)

Sept 15th: "Party in the Park" (see Gallery brochures)

House Guest opening

The Grange will be open full Gallery hours.

Sept 16th: Artist Talk and Tour (Education Theatre)

The Grange Volunteer Executive 2001-2002

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DAY CAPTAINS

Monday: Jane Heinemann

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House Guest Exhibition: A General Description of the Artists & Their Work

There will be seven artist's installations in The Grange. Some of the works are discreet, that the visitor will just 'chance' upon, whereas others will be 'in your face', so to speak. Some of the artists are established, whereas others are on the threshold of making a name for themselves. They are from Canada, Britain and the United States. What each has in common is that history, memory, anthropology and domestic history are important to their work. The artists were chosen based on proposals submitted and were carefully selected.

Luis Jacob, a Toronto artist, uses architectural elements to express social issues in his work. For House Guests he has chosen light as his medium. The chandelier in the music room will be replaced with a track system suspended from which will be 100 wires. Different intervals will be illuminated by light bulbs. The illuminated bulbs are to represent an angel, without its wings, running through space. His vision is that of the future, of looking forward, yet also of being rooted in the past. The work will be approximately 5.6m long x 2.5m high, therefore it will immediately engage the visitor when they walk into the room.

The Best Bedroom is the site of **Rebecca Belmore**'s work. As a native women she feels her voice, and those of Native Canadians, is not heard at The Grange. Her work represents that history which needs to be told. She plans to replace all the bedclothes and canopy covers with various materials and fabrics, such as human hair and fur. Do not be surprised to turn up for your shift and see a woman sleeping in the Best Bedroom! Rebecca is a performance artist and plans to randomly come to The Grange and sleep in the bed of the Best Bedroom. It will be very interesting to hear visitors comments when this happens! As she wrote in her proposal, "Imagine, a dark daughter of the forest slipping into the house and climbing into the master's bed. Who is she? What is she doing in this bed?"

Josiah McElheny, an established New York artist, works primarily with glass. His proposal was the last to be submitted, so the details are still being finalized. He is employing an old glass-working technique that creates a sort of distortion in mirrors. The mirrors will be strategically placed to reflect Harriet's wedding portrait, which will be moved temporarily to the front hall where the Robinson Sisters now hang (the Sisters portrait will be moved to another location). The result will be that when the visitor looks into the mirror they will think they are looking through a veil or that they are veiled. This may be a fun piece to engage the visitor when they first walk through the door. As mentioned, the details are still being finalized.

Elizabeth LeMoine's work will be the least obtrusive of all the artists. She is designing 10 small sculptures that will be placed throughout the house. Their location will be

random; some may be hanging or displayed in Victorian bell jars. They are meant to be unobtrusive and 'chanced upon', however they are also meant to intrigue the visitor and provoke discussion. She wishes her sculptures to serve as reminders of the recent past and trigger the viewers memories (whether they be borrowed memories or their own).

Another Toronto artist, **Robert Fones**, will transform the anti-room of the library with huge photographs of Lake Ontario with other interesting elements interspersed. All the artifacts in the cabinets will be removed, a light source will be installed and the photos will be mounted on plexiglass in front of the glass. The work is called 'Childless'. Three scenes will be represented within the depictions of Lake Ontario: one of an old doll, the other of the Schooner 'Speedy', and the third of two women who work at a bakery that sits on the parking lot where the doll was found. The work is called 'Childless' and also relates to Harriet being childless.

Elaine Reichek has chosen the 'very masculine Goldwin Smith library' to display her work. Entitled 'As she likes it', Elaine's work consists of five embroidered fire screens representing scenes and quotes from Shakespearean plays. The quotes chosen represent female points of view on marriage, courtship and the relationship between the sexes. The images have been taken from an illustrated book called *Minerva Britannia*, by Henry Peacham. Her idea is that the five fire screens with the embroidered quotes are to represent five women having a fireside chat in a room hostile to women. Jenny has stated that the embroidery work is so detailed in these pieces that the screens almost look like pen and ink drawings.

Christy Thompson, a young Toronto artist, has chosen the pantry as the site for her work 'camper'. 'camper' consists of 6 to 8 replica bottles cast in a smoky dark resin with a light bulb enclosed. The result will be flickering lights that represent past activity in the Grange and the bodies that inhabited the kitchen area, and will mirror the fire in the bake oven. The word 'camper' calls into mind someone who is there temporarily or something not permanent. The unusual nature of the piece and its location may give rise to more ghost stories!

As the name *House Guests* applies, these works are only temporary visitors to our house. Some of our 'guests' will be very visible, others less so. None of the work has been commissioned by the Art Gallery, therefore it is owned by the artists, and will leave with them once the exhibit ends. There will be text panels, like the ones we currently have, containing a brief explanation of the work presented. We hope to have some additional reading material for volunteers about interpreting Contemporary art to the visitor, for those of you who are uncertain how to approach the subject.

By Michelle Abrams

House Guests Update

By Michelle Abrams

House Guests is fast approaching and the final preparations are under way! 30 new volunteers have been recruited and are being trained. Training has been a bit of a whirlwind and hopefully not too overwhelming, as we have had to condense months of training into two sessions! However, the new volunteers are very excited and eager to help out with *House Guests* and to learn more about The Grange. We know that you will all make them feel welcome and plug how wonderful it is to volunteer at The Grange!

(We really would like them to stay even after our 'House Guests' have left!)

House Guests Training Sessions

There are two different training sessions scheduled in September relating to *House Guests*. We ask that all Grange volunteers attend one of the three *House Guests* training sessions and, if they can, the Contemporary Art training session (it should be very informative and helpful):

I

"Interpreting Contemporary Art to the Visitor"

Monday, September 10th @ 11:00am

Location: Education Theatre

II

"House Guests" Training

Wednesday, September 12th (evening)

Monday, September 24th @ 10:30 am or 2:00 pm

Location: Education Orientation Rooms

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Goldwin Smith - Still in the News

Canada's "Brain Gain" is featured in the July 1, 2001 issue of Macleans magazine. Goldwin Smith is mentioned as one of 50 people who chose Canada.

The following is from the Macleans article:

Goldwin Smith (1823-1910)

In Canada, his ideas came at least 100 years early, but when Goldwin Smith left England in 1868, the elite of Victorian England literally begged the controversial academic to stay. A distinguished political commentator and confidant of princes and politicians, Smith resigned the prestigious Regius professorship of modern history at Oxford before moving to the United States to teach at Cornell University.

What drove the middle-aged Smith across the ocean was intellectual restlessness. But after only three years, Smith, feeling isolated from Britain and the intellectual world, moved to Toronto. Canadian public affairs would never be the same.

At the time, Confederation was just four years old and at best an uncertain success. Canada was struggling with its identity - sorting through its strong attachment to England, fears of U.S. annexation and a nascent nationalism. Through the force of his pen, Smith became one of the leading figures of the times, eloquently and passionately promoting the highly unpopular ideas of free trade and then union with the United States. In his view, geography and trading patterns made for such a shared destiny. More in tune with the times, he also forcefully promoted Canada's independence from England, while maintaining that ties of blood and affection would ensure a lasting imperial bond.

Although U.S. union still remains a long shot, Smith's views on free trade have proved remarkably prescient.

REMINDER

Please submit your news articles for the
next Grange newsletter by
Friday, November 30, 2001.
Email submissions are welcome!